



# **SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

## **CHIEF OF POLICE**

**CRAIG N. MEIDL**

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## **Strategic Initiatives**

### **May 2022 Report**



## **Public Safety and Community Health Committee Briefing**

### **May 2, 2022**



**Selected Excerpts of Officer Commendations**  
**(Personal Identifying Information has been removed)**

**[Officers Austin Toal, Ryan Thomas, Ryan McLucas, Joe Dunsmoor, and Greg Thompson]**

On behalf of Inland Northwest Behavioral Health Hospital, we wanted to recognize each officer from SPD that responded to a unique situation at our hospital today. First and foremost, each officer engaged in teamwork with our staff so that the crisis situation would have the best chances for a safe resolution for the individual in crisis as well as all involved. The officers' attitudes towards working together and following our clinical team's lead was essential – and each officer showed that at an expert level. Each officer displayed consideration and compassion for the individual that was in crisis. Each officer utilized skills that represent trauma informed care. These aspects I am pointing out need to be celebrated in your officers and it a reflection of SPDs focused efforts on the mental health and wellness of our community. Thank you for your collaboration, partnership and friendship as we navigate the complexities of mental health together for the future stability of all those we serve.

I'd like to thank the officers that responded to my neighbor's apartment for a welfare check. It sounded like his primary care provider was worried about him, and that he did not want help. In spite of this, the officers (one introduced himself as **Officer [Adrian] Howell**) demonstrated patience and understanding as they tried to communicate with him through the door. They made sure to leave a line of communication for my neighbor in case he changed his mind.

**[Officers Whitney Hagan, Trevor Walker, Jeremy McVay]**

Just wanted to give a quick phone call to the two gentlemen and female officer who helped my son out on Thursday, about 10 pm. My son was having what we believe was a manic episode. We called 911, they sent out the officers. They were able to get my son to go to the hospital along with the ambulance. We just wanted to say thank you for loving him and caring for him. I know you guys, all officers, get a bad rap unfortunately, but we as a family back the blue. You guys and gals have such a rough go of it so just wanted to say thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being there when we needed you. God Bless you.

I was involved in a car accident. **Officer Austin Neale** was very concerned about my well-being. I appreciate his concern and he was very professional. I just wanted to thank him and let him know it was appreciated.



## Internal Affairs Unit Update

### January 1 through March 31, 2022, Commendations and Complaints

Commendations Received:    **Total: 63**

Complaints Received:        **Total: 18 (12 from community)**

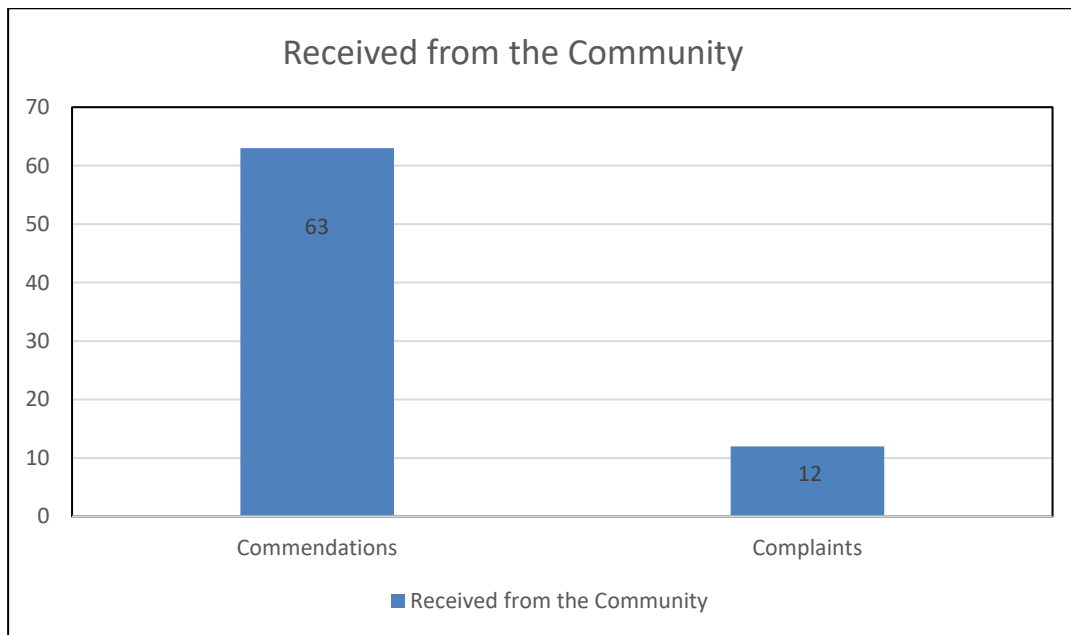
**Closed Out as Inquiries: 0 (As of March 31, 2022)**

*An inquiry is an initial complaint about employee conduct which, even if true, would not qualify as a personnel complaint and may be handled informally by a department supervisor and shall not be considered complaints.*

### Source of Complaints—January 1 through March 31, 2022

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman	<b>Total: 3</b>
Received by the Spokane Police Department	<b>Total: 15</b>
Internally Generated by the SPD	<b>Total: 6</b>
Generated by the Community	<b>Total: 12</b>

The department consistently receives more commendations from the community than complaints.



## **Use of Force Update**

### **2022 Non-Deadly Reportable Use of Force Incidents**

From January 1- March 31, 2022, there were 23 non-deadly use of force incidents, including K9 contacts and other types of force (e.g., TASER).

### **2022 Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)**

From January 1- March 31, 2022, there was one deadly force incident.

#### **Incident 2022-20012711 (Pending Criminal Investigation)**

Incident 2022-20012711 took place on January 24, 2022, in the area of 2400 E. Desmet. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

### **2021 Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)**

From January 1- December 31, 2021, there were two deadly force incidents. One is still open.

#### **Incident 2021-20059960 (Pending Deadly Force Review Board)**

Incident 2021-20059960 took place on April 17, 2021, in the area of 500 S. Cannon. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) conducted the criminal investigation. The Spokane County Prosecutor ruled the use of deadly force justified. SPD conducted an administrative investigation and found the incident to be within policy. A Deadly Force Review Board will be convened for a secondary review.





## Items of Interest

### Hiring and Recruiting Update

New employees: SPD recently welcomed two new civilian employees: Daniel Roach, Police Radio Dispatcher, and Faith Brooks, Police Records Specialist.

### Recruiting Grant:

In February, funded by the state grant, Officers Andres Valencia, Scott Hice, and Detective Graig Butler traveled to Portland, Oregon, and Southwest Washington for several recruiting events. They attended Public Safety Testing events, a Career Fair, a Diversity Career Fair, and presented to Criminal Justice students at Portland State University and Oregon State University. They also met with recently separated veterans now attending college. Officers also met with students at Washington State University and Eastern Washington University.

### Results from the Public Safety Testing website:

Comparing February 2022 recruiting data to February 2019, 2020, and 2021, SPD experienced the following positive trends of applicants taking the Public Safety Test:

- An increase in the number of overall applicants
- An increase in the number of females
- An increase in the number of African American and Hispanic males
- An increase in female applicants representing two or more races



In the upcoming months, the recruiting team has multiple recruiting trips planned, to locations such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, and Phoenix. The team will be attending more Diversity Hiring Fairs and will be recruiting at area colleges and military bases. Members of the recruiting team will also be attending local events, such as Public Safety Testing and Inland Northwest Skyfest at Fairchild Air Force Base. The team will continue to use social media marketing to advertise their presence at area events as well. All these plans will assist in reaching the

Spokane Police Department's goal of recruiting new and lateral officers from diverse backgrounds, to further increase the diversity of the department. Above, the Recruiting Cadre at a job fair.

### St. Patrick's Day March

SPD was thrilled to be a part of the 2022 St. Patrick's Day Parade. Our officers had a great time while helping keep attendees and participants safe.



### Pop with a Cop

Members of the Spokane Police Department showed their appreciation for social workers at the north office of the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families by serving up Italian Sodas, in honor of Social Work Month. SPD detectives work closely with these social workers to find best outcomes for children and families in crisis. Social workers have a very important and difficult job. Hats off and sodas up to you!





## Operation Engage Spokane



Chief Meidl, Mayor Woodward, and other local stakeholders are partnering with the DEA on Operation Engage Spokane. It's a community-level approach to addressing the fentanyl drug epidemic through awareness, prevention, and holding those responsible for drug distribution responsible.

Fentanyl is a growing concern in Spokane with far too many lives lost. Local health records show an 186% increase in fentanyl-related overdoses between 2020 and 2021. For more information, go to [Spokane.DEA.gov](https://spokane.dea.gov)

## Precinct Highlights

### **North Precinct**

#### Collaboration with Neighborhood Residents Addressing Quality of Life Issues

- In the West Central area, several Chronic Nuisance Notices (CNN) have been issued and abatement agreements signed. Several abandoned vehicles have been towed.
- In the Whitman neighborhood, one residence has a CNN and abatement completed and the eviction process has started. Another residence is in the pre-CNN stage. The NRO has made referrals to the Behavioral Health Unit for another problem address where there are multiple calls for service. The NRO is working with the property owner at another residence with multiple vehicle blocking and parking calls for service. The owner is having a rental management company evict and draft lease agreements for tenants.
- In the Chief Garry area, one of the residences with the most calls for service involved a person in crisis. The person has recently entered treatment and the calls for service should decrease.
- Mission Park has been a focus for NROs making frequent and consistent checks for vehicle prowlers. Criminal activity is down.

### **Downtown Precinct**

#### Crime Prevention Missions

The Downtown Precinct has been focusing on the area of Cedar to Madison and Sprague to 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Officers are trying to combat the drug dealing in the area. Emphasis patrols have resulted in reductions in calls for service. Calls for service at the area reduced from 93 in the two weeks before to 57 calls in the two weeks after the emphasis patrol. Vehicle prowling reports went from 18 to 3. The Precinct is currently focusing on Lincoln to Howard and 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenues, with high visibility patrols and enforcement. Vehicle prowling is a concern.

#### Precinct Outreach

- Neighborhood Resource Officer Micah Prim did a safety visit at Glow Daycare and Preschool.
- Downtown Community Court triage meeting
- Hot spotters meeting
- Downtown security group meeting

- Business Improvement District Board meeting
- Washington State Public Safety Review Panel meeting
- Riverside Neighborhood Council meeting

## **South Precinct**

### Detective Ty Snider's Retirement and Welcoming a New Detective to the South Precinct

After several years of service with the South Precinct, Detective Ty Snider retired on March 30, 2022. He will be missed! Graig Butler, who just promoted to Detective, is joining the Precinct. Detective Butler hails from the Community Outreach Unit. Detective Butler is pictured on the far right with his co-workers.



## **Outreach Update**

### Recent Outreach Activities

Spokane Juvenile Court Coordination of Services

PAL Boxing

Refugee Connections

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Northeast Community Center Coalition

### Spokane Art Coalition

The Community Outreach Unit met with the Coalition to see about partnering for youth outreach programs this fall. Similar to the Police Activities Program that provides sports and academic activities, this partnership could be a PAL program for students who enjoy art. Future meetings are in the works.

### Safe Place Program

The Spokane Safe Place Program/Initiative is an agreement between businesses, the police department and the community to report crimes (especially hate crimes) and provide a place for victims to safely wait for police. The Safe Place Initiative was created to start bridging the gap between targets of hate crimes and the police. The Initiative lets the community know where businesses stand on bias and hate crimes. It says to any victim that no matter the background or status, they will be heard, treated with care, dignity, and respect from the business, as well as from the police officers who respond to investigate.





Each business is given paperwork about what to teach their employees about hate crimes, and to let any victim to stay in the business until police arrive. Each business also gets a sticker to place on the front of the store, to let people know that it's part of the program.

We started the program for the City of Spokane, but have had several request from outside communities to join. We have not turned anyone down who wants to be a safe place. We advised the local law enforcement agencies in the area about it too. As of now, we have places in the City of Airway Heights, City of Cheney, City of Spokane Valley, City of Liberty Lake, and Spokane County.

Another business recently joined the Safe Place Program – Counselor Michele Wright, at 8518 E. Broadway, Spokane Valley. She learned about the Safe Place program at Starbucks Coffee. SPD partners with Starbucks all over the County.

### Did You Know – The Washington State Criminal Justice Commission lists Spokane Police Department's work with Refugees as a Promising Practice?

The Commission recognized SPD's partnerships with World Relief and Refugee Connections, specifically the classes SPD has delivered to foreign-born communities about how to report a crime, what to do if stopped, if they are a victim of a crime, and other law enforcement interactions.

Interacting with Law Enforcement Course includes:

- The various law enforcement agencies and their role: Local, state, and federal (Customs, Homeland Security, FBI, DEA).
- SPD's duties: Investigate crimes, community caretaking, education
- Use of Force
- Due Process
- How to Report a Crime (911 vs Crime Check), what happens next
- What to Do when Police are knocking at your door
- What to Do if you are stopped and detained, or stopped while driving
- Domestic Violence (what constitutes a DV relationship, mandatory arrest)
- No-Contact Orders
- Parental Discipline (what is considered assault and abuse)
- Police Investigations (including our work with advocacy organizations, translators)
- Understanding Consent per Washington State law
- Community Outreach, Community Resource Officers, Other Units in SPD

### Planning for a Refugee Welcome Event

The Community Outreach Unit is working with World Relief Spokane (WR) on refugee welcome event to take place this fall. SPD will host an informational session for the various immigrant communities here in the greater Spokane area. The topics to be covered include relevant case law, how to navigate a police detention/traffic stop, consensual day to day interactions, domestic violence laws, etc. The event would also give the opportunity for attendees to socialize with officers. Spokane County Sheriff's Office will have deputies at the event as well.

WR currently serves newly arrived Latinos from a variety of Central and South American countries, Russians, Ukrainians, Congolese, and Afghans. The leaders at WR indicated there is great interest in hearing from local law enforcement, and WR would be able to provide translators. WR also suggested that it would be beneficial for one representative from each community to provide law enforcement personnel with a brief presentation on the norms and customs of their particular group. That information could be compiled and shared throughout the department.

#### SPD at World Refugee Day Celebration (pre-COVID)



#### Training for Refugees

The Community Outreach Unit was at a Spokane Refugee and Immigrant Service Providers meeting when they were contacted by the Director to see if they could provide training at Global Neighbor Thrift. They have been hiring refugees at the store and wanted the managers to know about police programs and tactics they might see when patrol might have to come to the store, as they were the victim of a recent burglary. Neighborhood Resource Officer Micah Prim will conduct a CEPTD evaluation on the property to help out with crime prevention tips.



#### PAL Boxing

PAL Boxing meets every Tuesday at the Spokane Boxing Club (115 S. Jefferson) from 3:00-4:30 pm. We welcome youth between the ages of 12-17. We'd love to have them down to get a workout in with our officers! Please reach out to [spdcommunityoutreach@spokanepolice.org](mailto:spdcommunityoutreach@spokanepolice.org) for more information.



### Continued Collaboration with Les Schwab and the Spokane Police Foundation



During SPD's Christmas Adopt-a-Family program, one of the families said they had a desperate need for tires for their vehicle. Enter.....amazing partners, Les Schwab!

Community Outreach approached the Les Schwab team about this request and were told that Les Schwab would be happy to take care of this request on one condition if the Community Outreach Unit would have to go their Les Schwab shop and install the new tires on the vehicle, including doing the actual mounting of the tires. So, on March 23, 2022, the Community Outreach Unit picked up the vehicle, drove it to Les Schwab and put new tires on it.

SPD is so appreciative with Les Schwab's continued partnership with the department and the Spokane Police Foundation, and their ability to continue to work miracles in the lives of our community members here in Spokane through the Community Outreach Unit.

### Stevens Elementary Visit

Officer Graig Butler was promoted to Detective and is joining the South Precinct team, but wanted to get in another school visit before he left. This April visit to Stevens Elementary was a lot of fun for all.





***The Spokane Police Activities League (PAL) engages participating youth in positive athletic and academic programs, including gang and drug intervention and prevention. Join us for the 2022 Season this summer!***



PAL bridges the gap between Spokane Police officers and youth in our community through fun and educational summer activities.

<b>WEST CENTRAL PAL:</b> July 12 – August 9, 2022 Every Tuesday 12:00pm - 3:00pm AM Cannon Park, 1920 W. Maxwell	<b>HILLYARD NEIGHBORHOOD PAL:</b> July 13 – August 10, 2022 Every Wednesday 12:00pm - 3:00pm Friendship Park, 631 E. Greta Ave.
<b>EAST CENTRAL PAL:</b> July 14 – August 11, 2022 Every Thursday 12:00pm - 3:00pm Liberty Park, 1704 E. 4th Ave.	<b>Final Celebration:</b> To be held at each park on the last day of PAL

Activities offered: Basketball, Track, Baseball, Flag Football, and Soccer  
Spokane Public Schools Summer Meal Program provides lunches each day  
***This final event is tentative and may be canceled***

To register, please contact [SPDCommunityOutreach@spokanepolice.org](mailto:SPDCommunityOutreach@spokanepolice.org)